

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION NEA-11

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-12 ISO-00 IO-13 CIAE-00 DODE-00
PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01
SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11 AID-05 TRSE-00 OMB-01 ACDA-12
HA-05 NEAE-00 /123 W
-----077514 221347Z /64

P 221153Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY SANA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4790
INFO AMEMBASSY JIDDA PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MANAMA
AMEMBASSY MUSCAT

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 SANA 2416

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, YE
SUBJ: REBELLION LED BY PARATROOP COMMANDER ABDALLAH ABD AL-ALIM

REF: (A) SANA 2114, (B) SANA 2267

SUMMARY: YAR PRESIDENT GHASHMI USES FORCE TO DRIVE ABDET LAH
ABD AL-ALIM OUT OF YEMEN. END SUMMARY.

1. DISPUTE WITHIN YARG OVER WHETHER OR NOT TO USE FORCE TO
SUPPRESS RENEGADE PARATROOP COMMANDER ABDALLAH ABD AL-ALIM
(SEE REFTELS) MOUNTED OVER PAST WEEK WITH FAILURE OF MISSION
LED BY PRIME MINISTER ABD AL-AZIZ ABD AL-GHANI.

2. MISSION USED EVERY ENTICEMENT IT COULD THINK OF TO
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PLACATE ABD AL-ALIM. PRESIDENTIAL PLANE WAS PRE-
POSITIONED IN TAIZ, SPECIAL RADIO FREQUENCIES WHICH
WOULD ALLOW UNMONITORED CONVERSATIONS WERE SENT TO ABD
AL-ALIM BY MESSENGER, VARIETY OF MEETING PLACES, TIMES,
AND CONDITIONS WERE OFFERED, AND TERMS WERE STEADILY
SWEETENED. ACCORDING AHMED ABDO SAID AND OTHERS,
ABDALLAH WAS OFFERED SAFE CONDUCT, ESCORTED BY MINISTERS,

OUT OF YEMEN PLUS UNCONDITIONAL AMNESTY AND FAT STIPENDS FOR HIMSELF AND ALL HIS COLLEAGUES, OR JOBS IN SANA, OR JOBS IN TAIZ.

3. ON WEDNESDAY, MAY 17, GROUP OF PARATROOPERS FROM ABDALLAH ABD AL-ALIM MOVED UP ROAD FROM TURBA TO VILLAGE CALLED MISRAKH, WHERE DISTRICT GOVERNOR NAMED ABDALLAH AL-BAHR OCCUPIED GOVERNMENT BUILDING. BAHR REFUSED TO SURRENDER. PARATROOPERS ATTACKED, BUT COULDN'T GET INTO BUILDING FOR MOST OF DAY. SEIGE SUCCEEDED THAT EVENING, AND BAHR PLUS SOME TRIBESMEN FROM HIS NATIVE AREA OF MAWIYA -- NORTH OF TAIZ -- WERE KILLED. BAHR IS FAMILY WHICH DESCENDS FROM NORTHERN BAKIL, FAMILY OF DHU MUHAMMED, WITH ANCESTRAL HOME IN BARAT (IN JAWF). HE IS SHAYKH. BODY WAS TAKEN TO TURBA FOR DISPLAY.

4. SAME DAY, IN TURBA, WHICH IS CENTRAL TOWN OF HUGARRIYEH REGION, ABDALLAH ABD AL-ALIM MEN CLOSED SHOPS, AND CONVENED EVERYONE THEY COULD TO HEAR SPEECH OF THEIR LEADER. SPEECH INSISTED THAT YEMENI REVOLUTION WAS AT END, THE SOUTHERNERS WOULD ONCE AGAIN BE FORCED TO SUBMIT TO NORTHERN TRIBES REPRESENTED BY FAMILIES LIKE BAHR. GHASHMI WAS ILLEGIMATE RULER WHO HAD KILLED HAMDI, GREAT HOPE OF YEMENI INDEPENDENCE AND DEVELOPMENT. GHASHMI HAD TO GO. ABD AL-ALIM CALLED ON YOUNG MEN OF REGION TO TAKE UP ARMS. HE SAID YEMENI REVOLUTIONARIES MUST LOOK SECRET

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TO ADEN FOR HELP, AS HAMDI HAD DONE, NOT NECESSARILY ADOPTING SOUTHERN SYSTEM BUT COOPERATING CLOSELY.

5. GOVERNMENT HAD BY THIS TIME BEGUN TO PUT FORCES INTO PLACE FOR ASSAULT ON TURBA. SAUDI C-130'S FLEW PARATROOP UNITS UNDER NEW COMMANDER INTO TAIZ AIRPORT. SAUDIS MAY HAVE SUPPLIED OTHER EQUIPMENT. TANKS AND ARMORED CARS WERE BROUGHT UP FROM TIHAMA REGION -- BOTH BAJIL AND MANDAB AREAS. HOWEVER, AS LAST DITCH EFFORT AT CONCILIATION, DELEGATION OF 14 LOCAL HUGARRIYEH SHAYKHS LED GREY BEARD BUSINESSMAN ALI AL-ASBAHI -- CONTRACTOR HERE AND IN SAUDI ARABIA -- VISITED ABDALLAH ABD AL-ALIM WITH PLEA TO MAINTAIN PEACE. HE IMPRISONED THEM, PUT THEM ON TOP FLOOR OF BUILDING OCCUPIED BY HIS TROOPS, CLEARLY AS HOSTAGES TO ANY GOVERNMENT ATTACK.

6. GOVERNMENT ATTACK JUMPED OFF FRIDAY MORNING, WITH ELEMENTS FROM PARATROOPS, RESERVE FORCES LED BY HAMDU QATINAH, TANKS LED BY AHMED FARRAJ, AND MAJD INFANTRY LED BY ALI ABDALLAH SALAH. LAST TWO UNITS BASICALLY NORTHERN, FIRST TWO SOUTHERN. OVERHEAD, MIG'S PROVIDED TOP COVER. FORCE SWEEPED ASIDE TWO SMALL ROADBLOCKS WITH

FEW CASUALTIES AND GOT TO TURBA ONLY TO FIND THAT ABD AL-ALIM HAD DE-CAMPED TO URAISH, HIS HOME VILLAGE, WITH ALL HOSTAGES. MOST UNITS BEGAN SURRENDERING TO PARATROOPS UNDER GOVERNMENT COMMAND, BUT ONE UNIT BEGAN TO ATTACK GOVERNMENT POSITION CALLED QALA MAQTIRA. MIG'S WITH BOMBS AND STRAFING RUNS, KILLED AND WOUNDED ABOUT SIXTY ATTACKERS IN BIGGEST ENGAGEMENT OF DAY.

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P 221153Z MAY 78
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7. COLUMN WITH ABD AL-ALIM -- AND HIS FAMILY -- AND CLOSEST HENCHMEN AND HOSTAGES LEFT QURAISH LATER IN DAY AND HEADED TOWARD ADEN BORDER. ABD AL-ALIM LEFT BEHIND BULLET-RIDDLED BODY OF ASBAHI AS WARNING TO PURSUERS. MIG DISCOVERED COLUMN, SWOOPED DOWN LOW OVER IT, AND CREATED PANIC IN WHICH FOUR HOSTAGES ESCAPED. ACCORDING ABDALLAH HUMRAN, WHO HAS BEEN CONTACT MAN FOR YAR WITH ADEN THROUGHOUT REBELLION, WORD WAS RECEIVED FROM ADEN YESTERDAY, SUNDAY, MAY 20, THAT ABD AL-ALIM HAD ARRIVED THERE BUT WITHOUT HOSTAGES.

8. COMMENT: SO-CALLED REBELLION APPEARS TO BE OVER, ALTHOUGH BAZOOKA ATTACK IN TAIZ YESTERDAY KILLED THREE

PERSONS. GOVERNMENT HAS CONSIDERABLE TASK AHEAD IN
ARRESTING AND INTERROGATING PARTICIPANTS AND SYMPATHIZERS.

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THEY ARE ALL COUNTING THEIR LUCKY STARTS THAT ADEN CHOSE
NOT RPT NOT TO GET INVOLVED, PARTICULARLY IN UNMANNED
CENTRAL PROVINCES NORTH OF TAIZ AND IBB, WHERE THE
"MUQAWIMIIN" MOVEMENT IS STRONGEST. WITH PARTICIPATION
OF AIR FORCE, PARATROOPERS UNDER GOVERNMENT COMMAND AND
LOCAL SHAYKHS, GOVERNMENT HAS CLEARLY HELD ON TO SOUTHERNERS.
FAILURE TO DO THIS WAS OTHER NIGHTMARE SCENARIO WHICH OCCURRED
REGULARLY IN TALKS HERE. FACT THAT EVERYONE IN SANA PREDICTED
OUTCOME ACCURATELY DID NOT RELIEVE TENSION SURROUNDING
OPERATIONS. GHASHMI CAN NOW TURN TO ANNOUNCEMENT OF GOVERNMENT.
PRIMIN ABD AL AZIZ ABD AL-GHANI, HAVING WAITED FOR DAYS FOR
GHASHMI TO APPROVE GOVERNMENT LIST WORKED OUT IN ADVANCE OF
GHASHMI'S ELECTION AS PRESIDENT, IS THREATENING TO STEP
ASIDE IF GOVERNMENT NOT ANNOUNCED IN NEXT TWO DAYS. DOUBT
THAT HE WOULD CARRY THROUGH OR THAT GHASHMI WILL HESITATE
LONGER BUT GHASHMI DOES HAVE EVEN GREATER DEBTS THAN EVER
BEFORE TO MILITARY TRIO OF QATINAH, FARRAJ, ALI ABDALLAH
SALAH. THEY MAY SUGGEST SOUTHERNERS LIKE ASNAJ, ABD AL-
AZIZ. WE WOULD GUESS, HOWEVER, THAT GHASHMI IS IN STRONG
POSITION NOW AND WILL NOT BACK AWAY FROM TECHNOCRATS WHO,
ALONG AMONG YEMENIS, CAN MAKE GOVERNMENT HERE WORK.
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